

## Contributions

WARNING! WARNING!!

ZED H. COPP

While we are adverse to *morbid* sensationalism, yet it sometimes is necessary, in order to secure one's attention, to produce in them *sens-ation*, or sense-of-action. The above heading was written with this object in view. A man sleeping in a boat drifting towards a fall has no sensation of danger. His unconsciousness of the true state of affairs does not change the situation in the least, however. The Brethren church, strong in the Lord, still has a full complement of strong, wide-awake oarsmen who are rowing against the tide of popular religion—not Christianity—and are earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints.

But what of the future? While we are both by nature and grace an optimist, yet we cannot but look with doubt and fear to the future of the church, if we fail to wake up to certain changes now silently taking place. While it is true that the body of the church is unquestionably loyal to the fundamental practices of the church, it is also lamentably and equally true that some of the leading lights are *unsound* in the faith. Some have gone so far as to predict that the Brethren church of twenty years hence will have for its only distinctive feature trine immersion. Brethren, these things have had no weight with me until recently.

In preaching, in Sunday-school literature, in the contributions to the EVANGELIST, and at our conferences, there is a marked and seemingly growing indifference to the distinctive features of the church, which only are sufficient as an apology for her separate existence. If the boys of today, who will be the ministers of tomorrow, grow up surrounded by such influences, can we wonder if the church should prove to be at *ease* in Zion twenty years hence? The falling away of the Methodist and United Brethren from some of these primitive practices should be to us a warning example.

There is quite a popular novel entitled, "What Would Jesus Do?" I know and have read another book that has no equal which might very appropriately bear the title, "What Jesus *Did* Do." This is the book that we want to teach at home, in Sunday-school, in church and everywhere, that Jesus said was *truth*, and that when God speaks man should keep silent, and that which God enjoins man should unhesitatingly obey.

Let the distinctive practices of the church as they were instituted by Jesus and are practiced by the Brethren, be taught once each quarter in the Sunday-school, often in the K. C. of C. E., frequently as prayer meeting topics, and at

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regular intervals from the pulpit. Then we shall ever have consecrated, wide-awake oarsmen to man the ship and row against the tide.

### THE ESSENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

S. B. GRISSO

The glorious gospel of the blessed God, I Tim. 1:11.

The above words express the excellency of the word of God. They constitute a telescope thro which we can read the glorious plan of redemption. It is called the "Gospel," that is "good news." It is also called the "Glorious Gospel," because of its sweetness and its life giving power.

Is it within the power of a man to frame a sentence in so few words, so full of meaning, so beautiful, so complete, as this? It seems to me, in these words, I can yet hear the voice of the angel in that glorious annunciation message to the shepherds, "Fear not for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" . . . "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and good will to men." It is called the "Glorious Gospel" because it reveals those precious truths which, for ages were hidden. Even now, to a great extent do we fail to comprehend its beauty and grandeur. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." This does not mean in the world to come but now, in this present life. "God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit;" but we fail to a great extent of knowing them, our eyes are yet blinded and our ears closed. Let us pray God to open our eyes and unstop our ears that we may feel and enjoy these things to the fullest.

Before us lies a soul in a stupor of sin. Satan has administered the anaesthetic poison. That tongue that should speak the praises of this "Glorious Gospel" is silent and speechless. That face that should sparkle with joy, and send forth a glowing reflection is darkened with the indwelling sin. Man shrinks from him, and he is left alone. No words of pity or comfort come from any mortal soul. Often even no mother's love to share. But that voice which continues calling, when we cease, reaches his ear and arouses him from his stupor and sends a thrill of conviction thro his heart, thus he begins to realize his lonely condition. Once more that voice is heard, its tone is sweet, he draws nearer to the phone, it grows sweeter still, it is not the voice that once said "good for you, get out of your situation the best you can, and if you can't, you'll have to endure it"; its the voice of one that loves him to the uttermost. Its sweet tone turns him and he seeks the source. He finds it to be

the voice of the "Blessed God." It is good news to him, he hails it with delight, he embraces it and finds it a boon to his soul.

Herein is it a "glorious gospel," because it seeks the vilest one. It is willing to go where man shrinks from going.

Again it is glorious because it portrays "unity." It contains the religion of Jesus Christ. Each verse is not a separate disconnected truth. As there is "unity" in the religion of Jesus Christ, so is there "unity" in His Word. Its doctrines may be reduced to a few great truths. Thro them we can trace one great Spirit at work. To understand them we extract their essence. This universal Spirit which pervades every verse when found and applied to our soul will lift us up and we may behold that one great principle around which cluster other great truths, making them the "glorious gospel of the blessed God."

No truth is so worthy of accepting as this one. In proportion as we penetrate it, and are penetrated by it, we comprehend our religion, and attain to a living faith. This principle may be stated in a few words,—that God purposes in his unboundable Fatherly love to perfect the soul of man; to purify it from sin; to mould and fashion it after his own image; to fill it with his own Spirit; to raise it to life and immortality in heaven.

To thus purge, and cleanse and purify a soul, lifting it above the imperfections, temptations, sins and sufferings of this present world, and restoring it to its primitive purity is nothing short of a "glorious gospel" worked and managed by a "blessed God," suiting it to the wants of every soul.

Thro the Word we learn that God regards the human soul with intense interest and love. By our enduements, such as reason, judgment, and love, we can not help but see the impress of His infinity. That these powers may be developed into factors for good is proven by the fact that they may be developed into factors for evil. What God wills, is our perfection,—the full and complete development of these higher powers. We can lay it down then as a fundamental truth, that to man there is but one enduring good,—the complete Spiritual development of his own soul, and nothing but the "glorious gospel of the blessed God" can do it.

### GIVING ENRICHES THE GIVER

Read by Mrs. Mary Bauman of Roann, Ind., at the National Convention of the S. S. C. E. at Winona Park, Aug. 30, 1898

"A man there was, some called him mad;  
The more he cast away, the more he had."

Many may doubt the truth of this statement from Bunyan, but it is seen only when the gift is given to the Lord.

God himself gives us an example of giving. While we were yet sinners,